

Exhibit 5: Letters of Support

**COMMITTEES:**

AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE  
BUDGET  
BUDGET, SUBCOMMITTEE No. 3 ON  
RESOURCES  
EDUCATION  
NATURAL RESOURCES

**Assembly  
California Legislature**



**JULIA BROWNLEY**  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FORTY-FIRST DISTRICT  
CHAIR, BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE No. 2 ON EDUCATION FINANCE

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April 10, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman  
California State Coastal Conservancy  
1330 Broadway, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

**Re: Santa Clara River Parkway Acquisitions  
File no. 00-105 SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing in strong support of Coastal Conservancy funding for acquisition of the two subject properties that will help further implement the Santa Clara River Parkway project and preserve 1.5 miles of riparian habitat.

This is an important restoration project that will help provide flood relief to farmers and adjacent areas, assist in restoring critical habitat for endangered species, and expand public access and recreational use, among many other benefits.

The ultimate goal of a 23-mile river corridor is an exciting one, and I believe worthy of your support. I respectfully urge funding of these acquisitions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia Brownley", with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

**JULIA BROWNLEY**  
Assemblywoman, 41<sup>st</sup> District

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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10 April 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman  
California Coastal Conservancy Board of Directors  
Attn: Peter Brand  
1330 Broadway, 13th. Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Santa Clara River Parkway Grant – April 24, 2008 Agenda

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I would like to express strong support for the proposed grant to The Nature Conservancy to further implement the Coastal Conservancy's Santa Clara River Parkway Project through acquisition and conservation of the important lower reaches of the Santa Clara River. The Santa Clara River offers a truly unique opportunity to provide sustainable protection of biodiversity and ecosystem functions. This is the largest watershed in Southern California that retains much of its natural hydrology, thereby providing the flood/drought sequences critical to supporting riparian vegetation and associated wildlife species.

The Santa Clara watershed is of particular interest to the University of California because of its value for natural resources research and conservation, and in co-operation with The Nature Conservancy we have proposed a new research station in the watershed to be developed through the U.C. Natural Reserve System and the U.C. Agricultural Research Station. The Santa Clara River Reserve would be located roughly at the junction between the upper section of the river, and the lower section where the proposed acquisitions would occur. It would be dedicated to research to facilitate biodiversity conservation and ecological restoration, and to integrate sustainable agricultural productivity with conservation of floodplain ecosystems. It would further supplement the Education and Outreach element which is critical to the Santa Clara River Parkway mission.

Some of the conservation research programs we have underway in the Santa Clara River which would benefit tremendously from the proposed acquisitions include:

1. Survival studies of endangered southern steelhead trout smolts, particularly focused on the lower estuarine portion of the riverway;
2. Ecological and economic impacts and management of invasive riparian plants, particularly *Arundo donax*, tamarisk and Cape ivy, with an emphasis on development of biological control methods and application of riparian vegetation restoration methods;
3. Bioassessment of river condition using invertebrates and algae, including native organisms as well as monitoring to detect presence and spread of invasive species such as New Zealand mud snail, quagga mussels, and Louisiana crayfish;

## Exhibit 5: Letters of Support

4. Role of native and non-native vegetation in fluvial geomorphology, particularly erosion and sedimentation processes;
5. Photo-documentation of wildlife use of riparian and agricultural corridors between riparian and upland landscapes, and avian use of native and non-native vegetation types;
6. The Santa Barbara Channel Long-Term Ecological Research program, based at UCSB and funded by NSF, includes research on nutrient and sediment transport between terrestrial landscapes and the near-shore environment, and that shows that the Santa Clara River is the dominant ecological unit driving these dynamics – thus, conservation actions could have an important influence on the magnitude of these transport mechanisms.

For these and many other reasons, we greatly appreciate the Coastal Conservancy's prior commitment to protecting the upper portion of the Santa Clara River and enthusiastically recommend that this important investment in ecosystem protection be continued by approving this grant.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tom Dudley  
Research Associate  
Marine Science Institute

(and family farmer in the Santa Clara Valley)

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DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
RESEARCH OFFICE

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106-4060

April 10, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman  
California Coastal Conservancy Board of Directors  
1330 Broadway, 13th. Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Santa Clara River Parkway Grant – April 24, 2008 Agenda

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am fully in support of the proposed grant to The Nature Conservancy that will further implement the Coastal Conservancy's Santa Clara River Parkway Project.

I work on southern California steelhead trout (an endangered species) in this watershed and the California Coastal Conservancy's support of the Parkway Project is important to their survival. The purchase of river lands to allow natural flooding and reduce urban and agricultural inputs benefit steelhead and other riverine species, while increasing the size of estuarine wetlands (currently reduced to a ¼ of their historical size) is beneficial to juvenile steelhead that are migrating to the ocean.

I have been appreciative of the Coastal Conservancy's commitment to protecting this wonderful natural system and hope you will continue the effort by approving this grant.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elise Kelley", is written over a horizontal line.

Elise Kelley, Ph.D.



## Friends of the Santa Clara River

660 Randy Drive, Newbury Park, California 91320-3036 • (805) 498-4323

April 10, 2008

California Coastal Conservancy Board of Directors  
Attn: Peter Brand  
1330 Broadway, 13th. Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

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Ventura County  
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Coalition

Wishtoyo  
Foundation

RE: Santa Clara River Parkway Grant – April 24, 2008 Agenda

Dear Coastal Conservancy Board Members,

Friends of the Santa Clara River strongly support the proposed grant to The Nature Conservancy that will carry forward implementation of the Coastal Conservancy's Santa Clara River Parkway Project.

The Santa Clara River watershed, at 1600 square miles, is a vital natural resource in Southern California. The Santa Clara, although much better preserved than other rivers in Southern California, is located on the edge of a very large and expanding metropolitan system. Permanent protection of the river's floodplain and terrace lands is critical if the river is not to suffer the fate of other large rivers in the region. Acquisition of these lands also provides a significant measure of flood protection and aids in groundwater recharge.

Friends considers the Santa Clara River Parkway to be the most ambitious and most valuable river protection effort anywhere in California. Our 220-acre parcel near Santa Paula was the first parcel acquired in the Parkway project and is currently undergoing major riparian restoration. Overall, the Coastal Conservancy's prior investment in protecting the river has resulted in conserving about 12 miles of floodplain and associated lands, one third of the river's Ventura County section.

Friends commend and appreciate the Coastal Conservancy's long-term commitment to protecting this irreplaceable natural system and urge your board to continue this far-sighted effort by approving this grant.

Sincerely,

Ron Bottorff, Chair





DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY  
621 CHARLES E. YOUNG DRIVE SOUTH  
BOX 951606  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90095-1606

April 10, 2008

Mr. Douglas Bosco, Chairman  
California Coastal Conservancy  
13th Floor, 1330 Broadway  
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

It is exciting to hear that the California Coastal Conservancy is considering a major grant to The Nature Conservancy for the acquisition of two properties for the further implementation of the Santa Clara River Parkway. I would like to offer my enthusiastic recommendation that this grant be approved. The protection and enhancement of natural resources along the Santa Clara River will provide significant values to this important river as well as to the residents of California.

As you are no doubt aware, the Santa Clara River flows for approximately 116 mi from its headwaters near the town of Acton on the north slope of the San Gabriel Mountains, and empties into the Pacific Ocean between the cities of Ventura and Oxnard. The area at its mouth is already designated by the state as the Santa Clara River Estuary Natural Reserve. With about 95% of wetlands in Southern California already destroyed or dramatically altered, this large watershed of approximately 1,600 mi<sup>2</sup> and free-flowing state gives the Santa Clara River a special ecological significance. Sespe Creek, one of its tributaries, is the only stream in Southern California designated as a California Wild and Scenic River.

More than 17 threatened or endangered species occur along the Santa Clara River, as well as 20 additional species that may become endangered if their decline is not reversed. These threatened and endangered species include the anadromous southern steelhead trout, unarmored three-spined stickleback, southwestern pond turtle, red-legged frog, and least Bell's vireo. The river basin also contains numerous archeological sites and historical landmarks, adding to its significance. It is because of this diversity and associated threats that The Nature Conservancy has designated protection and environmental management of the Santa Clara River as a conservation priority.

There has been an active presence for many years in the Santa Clara River watershed by researchers from multiple campuses of the University of California. This work and efforts from other organizations and agencies has led to diverse scientific studies, as well as applied management research. Our academic researchers are now working with The Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Santa Clara River, Santa Clara River Trustee Council, the UC Natural Resource and Agricultural Extension, and other stakeholders to help coordinate restoration and resource enhancement projects along the river. The approval of this will be highly significant in helping to protect the Santa Clara River and its resources.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Philip W. Rundel".

Philip W. Rundel  
Distinguished Professor

April 10, 2008

Mr. Douglas Bosco, Chariman  
California Coastal Conservancy Board of Directors  
1330 Broadway, 13th. Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Santa Clara River Parkway Grant – April 24, 2008 Agenda

Dear Chairman Bosco,

I am writing to express Ventura Hillsides Conservancy's (VHC) support for the proposed grant to The Nature Conservancy that will further implementation of the Coastal Conservancy's Santa Clara River Parkway Project.

The Santa Clara River is the largest river in Southern California that is still in a relatively natural state. The Santa Clara and its tributaries represent the largest intact freshwater wetland system in the region. These wetlands are home to some 38 federally and/or state species designated as endangered, threatened or of special concern. Protecting this river also provides numerous other benefits such as flood protection and ground water recharge that benefit the local economy.

The Coastal Conservancy's prior investment in protecting the river has resulted in conserving about 12 miles or one third of its length in Ventura County. I commend your commitment to protecting this wonderful natural system and hope you will continue the effort by approving this grant.

Best regards,



Barbara M. Harison  
Executive Director





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Santa Monica CA 90401

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fax 310 496 1902

info@healthebay.org  
www.healthebay.org

April 11, 2008

California Coastal Conservancy Board of Directors  
Attn: Peter Brand  
1330 Broadway, 13th. Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Via Email and Fax: (510) 286-0470

RE: Santa Clara River Parkway Grant – April 24, 2008 Agenda

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed grant to The Nature Conservancy that will further implementation of the Coastal Conservancy's Santa Clara River Parkway Project.

The Santa Clara River is the largest river in Southern California that is still in a relatively natural state. The Santa Clara and its tributaries represent the largest intact freshwater wetland system in the region. These wetlands are home to some 38 federally and/or state species designated as endangered, threatened or of special concern. Protecting this river also provides numerous other benefits such as flood protection and ground water recharge that benefit the local economy. In 2005, the Santa Clara River was named the "10<sup>th</sup> Most Endangered River" in the Country by the American Rivers organization.

The Coastal Conservancy's prior investment in protecting the river has resulted in conserving about 12 miles or one third of its length in Ventura County. I commend your commitment to protecting this wonderful natural system and hope you will continue the effort by approving this grant.

Sincerely,

Kirsten James  
Water Quality Director